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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

12 February 1959

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PART II

NOTES AND COMMENTS

NUCLEAR TEST TALKS

The Soviet Foreign Ministry demand on 7 February for an unequivocal Anglo-American response to Moscow's insistence on a permanent unconditional test-cessation agreement, in combination with recent Soviet moves at Geneva, suggests that Moscow is preparing the record in anticipation of a stalemate which could lead to a suspension of negotiations. Resembling in form the Soviet delegate's over-all position summarized at the conference on 30 January, the statement makes it clear that the USSR will stand on its basic position and now is concentrating on improving its public posture.

The detailed criticisms of the Western position on the key issues of duration of the treaty and voting procedures in the control commission were designed to make the Soviet stand on these issues appear reasonable in contrast with the Western viewpoint.

Moscow probably hopes the statement will help its delegation blur the present sharp focus on the issues of control-commission voting procedures and control-post staffing and shift the emphasis to the refusal of the British and Amer-

icans to answer whether they would agree to cease testing "for all time."

On 6 February Soviet chief delegate Tsarapkin said the conference was deadlocked and warned that the delegates might part "in a few days" without being able to submit a report to their governments because of the failure of the Western powers to present their full position. Tsarapkin criticized the "piecemeal" methods used by the United States and Britain in introducing their draft articles.

The Soviet delegation within the next week may make further adjustments in its position--without altering Moscow's basic stand on voting procedures and duration--in order to underscore its professed desire to conclude an agreement "as soon as possible." Ambassador Wadsworth feels that the British delegation is unhappy over the present sharp clash and may be inclined to interpret almost any Soviet gesture as a real concession. As a final move before a breakoff, the Soviet delegation might propose that the nuclear-test issue be discussed at any future high-level East-West conference.

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